

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION 271

By DeBerry L

A RESOLUTION to recognize and commend the efforts of the Memphis Belle Memorial Association in providing for the historic aircraft's care, display, and restoration and to express support for this exemplary organization.

WHEREAS, our nation was conceived by individuals who were willing to sacrifice their personal safety and concerns to ensure our individual and collective freedom, and the Volunteer State is especially proud to be the home of so many valiant men and women who have performed above and beyond the call of duty; and

WHEREAS, Tennessee, the "Volunteer State," has a long and proud heritage of providing soldiers when our country and its freedom have been threatened; and

WHEREAS, the Memphis Belle, a veteran aircraft from the Second World War, is an important part of that storied legacy; designated a national historic treasure by the United States Air Force, she is one of the enduring symbols of the Allied Forces' commitment to freedom and of their victory during World War II; and

WHEREAS, the Memphis Belle, one of the true treasures of this country's air power history, was one of the first B-17 Flying Fortress bombers of the Mighty Eighth Air Force to complete the required twenty-five bombing missions during World War II and return safely to the United States for a thirty-two city War Bond Tour; and

WHEREAS, the brave soldiers who served so valiantly aboard the Memphis Belle completed each of their assignments with the greatest courage, dedication, and ability; the sacrifices of these soldiers constitute a gift to their fellow Americans that can in no way be repaid; and

WHEREAS, the Memphis Belle and her crew performed the many demanding duties of a combat aircraft in an outstanding manner throughout the many months the aircraft engaged the enemy in combat; her crewmen repeatedly demonstrated the utmost daring and devotion to duty; and

WHEREAS, the Memphis Belle crewmen's acumen, bravery, and untiring efforts to successfully complete each of their missions during World War II reflect heroically upon them and the United States Armed Forces; and

WHEREAS, known to many as members of "The Greatest Generation," those courageous soldiers served with valor and gallantry and deserve proper recognition for their heroism both in the United States Armed Forces and in society, as they have left behind an unparalleled legacy of courage, commitment to duty and country, selfless sacrifice and perseverance; and

WHEREAS, the Memphis Belle was rescued from the Altus, Oklahoma "Graveyard of the Eagles" in 1946, and was then transported to Memphis where it has been on public display for more than fifty-eight years; and

WHEREAS, the Memphis Belle Memorial Association, Incorporated is charged with the preservation of this famous aircraft, honoring her history and her crew, and educating generations about their inspirational service, thereby providing an understanding of the services and sacrifices of our fellow Americans in the defense of freedom and democracy; and

WHEREAS, having accepted this responsibility as an honor, this fine aircraft has been lovingly restored and preserved by the Memphis Belle Memorial Association for more than thirty years; and

WHEREAS, the Memphis Belle Memorial Association and the United States Air Force have a partnership and share the same goal, ensuring that the Memphis Belle is preserved and displayed with the appropriate honor and respect the aircraft holds in both airpower and our National history; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE ONE HUNDRED FOURTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE SENATE CONCURRING, that we express our gratitude to and strongest support of the Memphis Belle

Memorial Association for their efforts in preserving an invaluable artifact of the history of freedom in our great Nation and in our world.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that we recognize and commend the efforts of the Memphis Belle Memorial Association in providing for the historic aircraft's long-term care, display, and restoration in Memphis.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that an appropriate copy of this resolution be prepared for presentation with this final clause omitted from such copy.